

The first inference is that the whole system of grading must be on a different standard to that obtaining here. Many people will dispose of these disturbing figures with that explanation. They will have some justification. No two investigators will assess the same individual alike on the marginal lines between one grade and another. Abroad, as at home, each experienced examiner tends to use his own individual type of test. Much inquiry has been needed to elicit from the best-known authorities what they regarded as their ultimate standard. Everywhere tests are themselves graded by the Binet-Simon standard. Twice I have had lengthy expositions from Dr. Brugger on his methods. Dr. Wildenskov has twice explained the similarity between his work and that of the German investigators; and the Europeans as a whole accept each other's gradings without serious question. Neither do they criticize the gradings in our institutions when they have had the opportunity of studying them here.

I have felt compelled to draw attention to the tragic comparison between the numbers of the lower grades of intelligence in our own country and the Anglo-Saxon countries on the Continent with which we are competing industrially. Everywhere the figures are approximate and approximate only, but they stand roughly at one abroad to four at home. Here, many are inclined to question putting the mentally sub-normal (that is, up to intelligence quota of 95) as high as 10 per cent. Sir George Newman made this calculation on the school attainments of "leavers." For the layman the question can best be settled by seeing the proportional distribution in intelligence on the graph given by Cyril Burt for London, which is generally admitted to rank slightly higher than the country as a whole.

An explanation was attempted at some length in a paper on contra-selection given at the Eugenics Congress in New York, 1932, of which I have reprints for any who would like them (in the report "A Decade of Progress in Eugenics," see pages 372, 377). Those, however, who appreciate the evidence we have (a) for the transmission of intelligence, (b) for the frequent occurrence of feeble-mindedness in the offspring of parents round about the level of I.Q. 90-95, will find the marriage regulations abroad sufficient explanation. A reputation of feeble-mindedness usually prevents a marriage licence being obtained by the male; this explains the higher percentage of feeble-minded mothers than fathers in some of the papers quoted, despite the fact that assessments show more male than female feeble-mindedness. Further, until the middle of last century, marriage licences were only granted abroad (in the Anglo-Saxon countries) where the applicant could show that his earnings were sufficient to support a wife and family and that they were likely to be permanent. I should be grateful to any sociologist who could give further data on this point, which I read in an article without noting the title. Allusions in some

of the papers cited in the Brock Report show that economic stability still influences consideration of eligibility for marriage licences.

What we now chiefly want, I submit, is assessments of the grade of intelligence obtaining in the numerically largest portion of these populations. Burt's study gives this as I.Q. 100 for England. Unfortunately, I have not yet obtained any sample studies for this abroad, and I am convinced that as yet nothing exists there nearly as complete as the London study.

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To the Editor, Eugenics Review

SIR,—I have read Mrs. Hodson's letter and am surprised to find that, so far as the European material is concerned, her statement is based upon the evidence which I collected on behalf of the *Society* for submission to the Brock Committee.

I would like emphatically to state that I do not consider that the figures collected in the *Society's* evidence and contained in the papers mentioned by Mrs. Hodson bear the interpretation which she has placed upon them. I feel confident, moreover, that Mrs. Hodson would have some difficulty in finding a single responsible psychiatrist in this country who would support her interpretation. As far as I am able to understand Mrs. Hodson's letter, she contends that, whereas in this country some 10 per cent. of the population has been estimated as being mentally retarded, in Germany only some 2 to 3 per cent. of the population is eligible for sterilization on the grounds of being oligophrenic. Oligophrenia as evaluated in Germany, she further seems to argue, is equivalent to mental retardation as judged in this country. From this she deduces the statement contained in her circular letter that, according to the best data available, there exists approximately four times as much feeble-mindedness in Great Britain as in the northern part of Europe.

If I have correctly interpreted Mrs. Hodson's argument, I would say that this deduction seems to me to be entirely fallacious on the following grounds:

1. There is no evidence that the authorities who have drawn up the German Sterilization Law would regard as oligophrenic all persons with an I.Q. of 95 and under.
2. There is no evidence that in Germany persons of an I.Q. up to 95 constitute 2 to 3 per cent. of the population.
3. There is no evidence for supposing that persons with an I.Q. of 95 or under, regarded as an aggregate, correspond in any way with "the Social Problem Group" as described by the Wood Committee.
4. Even if full evidence on points 1, 2 and 3 were available, this would have nothing to do with

Mrs. Hodson's statement that *feeble-mindedness* was four times as common in England as it is in the Northern parts of Europe and kindred nations of Central Europe. Feeble-mindedness has been legally defined and, for psychiatrists, has a quite different connotation from mental retardation such as is associated with intelligence quotients of between 80 and 95. Mrs. Hodson's main argument, moreover, seems to be based not on the papers she mentions by Lokay, Brugger, etc., but on a statement of the authorities who are responsible

for the administration of the German Sterilization Law.

I am therefore at a loss to understand why the papers in question have been quoted at all.

Finally, I have been authorized to say that, so far as the Board of Control is aware, there is no evidence whatever for the statement quoted in Mrs. Hodson's circular letter. I should like to express the hope that it will not be regarded as representing the views of this *Society*.

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